

# **SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS TO GILLNET VESSEL OWNERS**

## **General gillnet vessel designation and tagging requirements:**

A vessel owner electing to fish with gillnet gear in the Northeast multispecies or monkfish fisheries must complete a gillnet tag form. Currently, all vessels issued a limited access NE multispecies permit intending to fish under a Northeast (NE) multispecies days-at-sea (DAS) with gillnet gear must obtain an annual designation as either a Day or Trip gillnet vessel. Declarations are to be made on a form provided by NOAA Fisheries and signed by the vessel authorized representative. This form is enclosed. It can also be obtained by calling the Northeast Regional Permit Office at (978) 281-9370, or through the Northeast Regional Office's web site (listed at the end of this letter).

All vessels must indicate the number of gillnet tags that are being requested on the gillnet tag form provided by NOAA Fisheries, and provide a check for the cost of the tags. Once a declaration form has been received, NOAA Fisheries will send a gillnet tag certificate and category designation form (one form) to the vessel owner that serves as written confirmation from the Regional Administrator that the vessel is a Day or Trip gillnet vessel. This confirmation must be retained on board the vessel when fishing under a NE multispecies DAS with gillnet gear.

Both Day and Trip gillnet vessels will be authorized to obtain up to 150 gillnet tags. A vessel may have tags on board the vessel that are in excess of the number of tags corresponding to the allowable number of nets for a given Regulated Mesh Area (RMA), provided such tags are onboard the vessel and can be made available for immediate inspection.

A gillnet vessel may stow additional nets on board that are in excess of the allowable nets for a given RMA, up to 150 nets for Day gillnet vessels, counting the number of deployed nets. Trip gillnet vessels are not restricted to the number of nets that can be stowed on board the vessel. All nets in excess of the allowable number of nets for a given RMA must be stowed according to the regulations.

**General gillnet gear requirements:** For purposes of gillnet gear requirements, gillnets are defined as follows:

- **Roundfish gillnet:** A gillnet constructed with floats on the float line and no tie-down twine between the float line and the lead line.
- **Flatfish gillnet:** A gillnet constructed with no floats on the float line, or with floats on the float line and that has tie-down twine between the float line and the lead line not more than 48 inches in length and spaced not more than 15 feet apart.

## **Vessels fishing under the Large Mesh DAS program using gillnets:**

Vessels that hold a valid limited access Northeast multispecies Large Mesh Individual Days-at-Sea category (Category F) permit will be required to fish with nets having a mesh size that is 2.0 inches larger than the current regulated mesh size when fishing under the NE multispecies DAS program.

## NEW GILLNET TAG SERIES FOR FISHING YEAR 2004

**Effective August 1, 2004, a new gillnet tag series (BLUE in color) will be required for gillnets in place of the current valid teal-green gillnet tag series that have been in use since 2000.** For the 2004 fishing year, the new BLUE gillnet tags must be used by all limited access Northeast (NE) multispecies and monkfish vessels fishing with gillnet gear under the Days-at-Sea (DAS) program.

### **Amendment 13 Gillnet Regulations:**

Amendment 13 to the NE Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP) was approved in large part on March 18, 2004, and will become effective on May 1, 2004. In addition to implementing new comprehensive management measures, Amendment 13 revises some of the existing gillnet regulations. A separate letter describing modifications to the gillnet regulations under Amendment 13 was previously sent to you. Please refer to this letter for further information. This letter is also available on our website at [www.nero.noaa.gov](http://www.nero.noaa.gov). A summary of the gillnet gear requirements is contained in the table below.

**Gear Restrictions for Amendment 13 to the NE Multispecies FMP by Regulated Mesh Areas.**

	Gulf of Maine	Georges Bank	Southern New England	Mid-Atlantic
NE Multispecies Day Gillnet Category*	<u>Roundfish nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 50-net allowance; 2 tags/net	<u>All nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 50-net allowance; 2 tags/net	<u>All nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 75-net allowance; 2 tags/net	<u>Roundfish nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 75-net allowance; 2 tags/net
	<u>Flatfish nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 100-net allowance; 1 tag/net			<u>Flatfish nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 75-net allowance; 2 tags/net
NE Multispecies Trip Gillnet Category*	<u>All nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 150-net allowance; 1 tag/net	<u>All nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 150-net allowance; 1 tag/net***	<u>All nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 75-net allowance; 2 tags/net	<u>All gillnet gear</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 75-net allowance 2 tags/net;
Monkfish Vessels**	10" (25.4 cm) mesh/150-net allowance			
	1 tag/net			

\* When fishing under a NE multispecies DAS

\*\* Monkfish Category C and D vessels, when fishing under a monkfish DAS

\*\*\*Although the final rule indicates 2 tags/per net, NOAA Fisheries intends to correct this to 1 tag/net to more accurately reflect the intent of Amendment 13.

**Gillnet Tag form must be completed if your vessel will be fishing with Gillnets under a Northeast (NE) Multispecies Days at Sea (DAS) or Monkfish DAS during the 2004 fishing year (May 1, 2004-April 30, 2005).**

- If you have a limited access NE multispecies permit or a limited access NE multispecies permit **and** a limited access monkfish permit, you must fill out Section 1, Section 2, and Section 3.
- If you have a limited access monkfish permit only (and **no** limited access multispecies permit), you must fill out Section 2 and Section 3.

**Section 1-** Limited access NE multispecies permit holders who intend to use gillnet gear under a multispecies day-at-sea must declare into **one of the following** gillnet category designations by selecting one of the following two categories with a check mark: (please read the “Special Instructions to Gillnet Vessel Owners” if you do not know which category you should choose)

Trip Gillnet Category \_\_\_\_\_ **or** Day Gillnet Category \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: Both Day and Trip Category vessels are restricted to 150 tags.**

## Section 2

**All gillnet vessel owners must purchase new BLUE gillnet tags. NOTE: Current teal green gillnet tags are valid through July 31, 2004. The new BLUE gillnet tags are required beginning August 1, 2004.**

**Please indicate how many tags that you wish to purchase by filling out the following information.**

Number of tags requested \_\_\_\_\_. (Multispecies tags are limited to 150, Monkfish tags are limited to 160 for Category A and B vessels, 150 for Category C and D vessels. **The new BLUE gillnet tags cost \$1.20 each.** (NOTE: An additional shipping and handling charge of \$5.00 must be included for orders of 20 or less tags.) (NOTE: The total cost for 150 tags is \$180.00.)

Total amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to **National Band and Tag Company** and complete Section 3 below.

**Initial Tags will be shipped to you directly from the tag manufacturer**

## Section 3

Vessel Name \_\_\_\_\_

Federal Permit # \_\_\_\_\_

Documentation # \_\_\_\_\_

or State Registration # \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Gillnet tags will be used to fish for:**

Multispecies (circle) Yes No

Monkfish (circle) Yes No

Please call the NMFS Northeast Regional Office information line at (978) 281-9278 if you have any questions.

Return this form and payment to:  
**NMFS Permits Office, Gillnet Program**  
**One Blackburn Drive**  
**Gloucester, MA 01930-2298**

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The information will be used in the management of the NE multispecies and monkfish fisheries. One of the regulatory steps taken by NOAA Fisheries to carry out the conservation and management objectives of these fishery management plans is limiting fishing vessel effort. The application to designate a gillnet category and order gillnet tags is meant to allow industry members to designate their appropriate gillnet category and order the appropriate number of gillnet tags in accordance with 50 CFR 648.4(c)(2)(iii) and 648.80(a)(3)(iv), 648.80(a)(4)(iv), 648.80(b)(2)(iv), and 648.80(b)(2)(v). Since this requirement has been adopted as part of the effort reduction programs under the NE Multispecies and Monkfish Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) it is viewed as consistent with the conservation goals of these FMPs.

**BURDEN STATEMENT:** Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or suggestions for reducing this burden to: Patricia A. Kurkul, Regional Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS, 1 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930-2298; and to Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503.

The information collected on this form is not confidential and can be made available to the general public.

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